

responsibility under which he acted at the battle of Buena Vista, fought after he had been recommended by his senior general to retire to Monterey.

5. Around him stood those whose lives were in his charge, whose mothers, fathers, wives, and children would look to him for their return; those were there who had shared his fortunes on other fields; some who, never having seen a battle, were eager for the combat, without knowing how direful it would be; immediately about him were those loving and beloved, and reposing such confidence in their commander, that they but waited his beck to do and dare.

6. On him, and on him alone, rested the responsibility. It was in his power to avoid it by retiring to Monterey, there to be invested and captured, and then justify himself under his instructions. He would not do it, but cast all upon the die, resolved to maintain his country's honor, and save his country's flag from trailing in the dust of the enemy he had so often beaten, or close the conqueror's career as became the soldier. His purpose never wavered, his determination never faltered; his country's honor to be untarnished, his country's flag to triumph, or for himself to find an honorable grave, was the only alternative he considered. Under these circumstances, on the morning of the 23d of February, that glorious but bloody conflict commenced. It won for him a chaplet that it would be a disgrace for any American to mutilate, and which it were an idle attempt to adorn. I leave it to a grateful country, which is conscious of his services, and possesses a discrimination which is not to be confounded by the assertions of any, however high their position.

HON. JEFFERSON DAVIS.